



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/004,384	10/31/2001	Stefan Edward Strickholm	50449-00002	9103
70406	7590	04/09/2008	EXAMINER	
WAGNER BLECHER LLP 123 WESTRIDGE DRIVE WATSONVILLE, CA 95076			SHAW, PELING ANDY	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		2144		
		MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE
		04/09/2008		PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>
	10/004,384	STRICKHOLM ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>
	PELING A. SHAW	2144

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 January 2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**.                            2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-57 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-57 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 01/22/2008 has been entered. Claims 1, 21, 30, 35 and 48 are amended. Claims 1-57 are currently pending
2. Amendment received on 08/03/2007 was entered. Claim 21 was amended.
3. Applicant's submission filed on 10/20/2006 was entered. The Specification change was examined and accepted. Amendment received on 01/08/2007 was entered into record. Claims 1, 21, 35 and 48 were amended. Claims 58-100 were withdrawn.
4. Amendment received on 04/10/2006 was entered into record. Claims 1, 14, 21, 41, 96 and 99 were amended.
5. Pre-exam amendment received on 08/26/2002 was entered. Claims 2-100 were new. The amended specification changes are reviewed and accepted. The amended proposed drawing changes are reviewed and accepted.

### ***Priority***

6. This application claims the benefit of 60/245,138 on 11/01/2000. The filing date is 10/31/2001.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-10, 12-16, 18-21, 24-25, 27-28, 30-31, 34-35, 37-48 and 50-57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sedlar (US 6549916 B1), hereinafter referred as Sedlar, and in view of Gainey et al. (US 6941304 B2), hereinafter referred as Gainey.

a. Sedlar shows (claim 1) a method for enhancing communication within a community, the method comprising: (a) establishing a hierarchical structure for organizing communications between a plurality of users within the community (column 1, line 58-column 2, line 12: hierarchy-based organization; column 27, line 24-column 28, line 20: message for hierarchical file system events); (b) distributing control through selection of inherited parameters of said hierarchical structure to at least one of said plurality of users (column 1, line 58-column 2, line 12: reflect some intuitive relationship between the meanings that have been assigned to the directories; column 26, lines 58-64: override inherited routine; column 35, line 44-column 36, line 14: inherited subclass, attributes, methods and codes), wherein said inherited parameters comprise parameters defining access by said plurality of users to said communications organized within said hierarchical structure (column 11, line 21-62: access control per file, read, update, insert, execute, change permission); (c) storing in

said hierarchical structure at least a portion of said communications received from said plurality of users from at least one a plurality of input devices (column 1, line 58-column 2, line 12: for each document to be stored in a directory based on some intuitive relationship between the contents of the document and the meaning assigned to the directory in which the document is stored) in relation to at least one of a plurality of topics that is user selected (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20: reviewing technical documents, a technical document, “ready for review” directory, version of document); (z) providing a link to a resource associated with said at least a portion of said communications that is stored, wherein said link is available for access by authorized users of said plurality of users (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20: linking file to a particular directory; column 30, lines 22-24: references, HTML links); (d) prioritizing said at least a portion of said communications within said hierarchical structure (column 36, line 15-31: e-mail documents to have a priority property attribute); (e) presenting to at least a one of said plurality of users through said at least one of plurality of input devices a selected portion of said communications stored in said hierarchical structure (column 23, line 34-47: display of contents based upon the query associated with the document directory) , wherein said selected portion of said communications are related under said at least one of a plurality of topics that is user selected (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20: reviewing technical documents, a technical document, “ready for review” directory, version of document); and (f) enabling dynamic interaction through further contributions of communications by said at least a one of said plurality of users

through said at least one of a plurality of input devices in response to presentation of said selected portion of said communications within said hierarchical structure, wherein said further contributions of communications are stored and accessed within said hierarchical structure in relation to said topic (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20: “ready for review” directory, notification rule, event id, storage, creation, movement, modification or deletion of files), where said further contributions are associated with at least one discussion thread comprising a recorded communication under said at least one of a plurality of topics that is conducted between participating users of said plurality of users (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20: reviewing technical documents, a technical document, “ready for review” directory, version of document; column 29, lines 60-65: documents related to projects). Sedlar does not explicitly show (claim 1) wherein an initial thread of said plurality of communications is assigned a higher priority than a response to a thread of said plurality of communications; and presenting to at least a one of said plurality of users at least a portion of said plurality of communications based on said prioritization. However, Sedlar does show (Fig. 16-17) an e-mail class/table with priority attribute; (column 36, line 15-31) e-mail documents to have a priority property attribute; (column 35, line 44-colum 36, line 14) attribute inheritance and (column 32, line 62- column 33, line 11) linking files descended from versions of root project directory.

b. Gainey shows (claim 1) wherein an initial thread of said plurality of communications is assigned a higher priority than a response to a thread of said plurality of communications (column 6, lines 19-22: mail receiver action rule highest priority;

column 6, lines 51-54: internal same sender route action takes precedence over all over workflow actions; column 7, lines 55-60: keep thread ownership, same user responds to a particular incoming message should receive all subsequent responses); and presenting to at least a one of said plurality of users at least a portion of said plurality of communications based on said prioritization (column 7, lines 55-60: keep thread ownership, same user responds to a particular incoming message should receive all subsequent responses; column 9, lines 9-19: workflow action place the incoming mail message into a particular message queue) in an analogous art for the purpose of enterprise email management.

- c. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify Sedlar's functions of message based event notification system on a hierarchical file system with Gainey's functions of e-mail management workflow.
- d. The modification would have been obvious because one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate e-mail processing workflow based on action priority per Gainey (column 6, lines 19-53)' teaching in addition to a hierarchical access and event functions per Sedlar (column 11, line 21-62; column 27, line 24-column 28, line 20)'s teaching.
- e. Regarding claim 2, Sedlar shows wherein said establishing a hierarchical structure further comprises: creating a top-level hierarchy having at least one top-level subject (column 1, line 58-column 2, line 12); creating at least one mid-level hierarchy, each of said at least one mid-level hierarchy having at least one mid-level subject related to

at least one of said at least one top-level subject (column 1, line 58-column 2, line 12); and creating a low-level hierarchy having at least one low-level subject related to at least one of said at least one mid-level subject (column 1, line 58-column 2, line 12), wherein each of said stored communications becomes an item indexed to at least one of said at least one low-level subject (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20).

f. Regarding claim 3, Sedlar shows wherein said distributing control through inherited parameters said hierarchical structure further comprises: assigning at least one top-level leader for each of said at least one top-level subject (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20); assigning at least one mid-level leader for each of said at least one mid-level subject (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20); and assigning at least one low-level leader for each of said at least one low-level subject (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20).

g. Regarding claim 4, Sedlar shows wherein said distributing control through inherited parameters of said hierarchical structure further comprises: assigning at least one of said inherited parameters to each of said at least one top-level subject, wherein said at least one of said inherited parameters controls input or access to a database function by said at least one top-level leader associated with said at least one top-level subject (column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48); assigning at least one of said inherited parameters to each of said at least one mid-level subject, wherein said at least one of said inherited parameters controls input or access to a database function by said at least one mid-level leader associated with said at least one mid-level subject (column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48); and assigning at least one of said inherited

parameters to each of said at least one low-level subject, wherein said at least one of said inherited parameters controls input or access to a database function by said at least one low-level leader associated with said at least one low-level subject (column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48).

h. Regarding claim 5, Sedlar shows wherein said at least one of said inherited parameters assigned to each of said at least one low-level subject inherited from said at least one mid-level subject related to said at least one low-level subject (column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48), and further wherein said at least one said inherited parameters assigned to each of said at least one mid-level subject is inherited from said at least one top-level subject related to said at least one mid-level subject (column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48), and further wherein said at least one of said inherited parameters assigned to each of said at least one top-level subject is inherited from a web master (column 15, line 55-67; column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48).

i. Regarding claim 6, Sedlar shows wherein said at least one parameter inherited by each of said at least one low-level subject the same as, or narrower scope, than said at least one parameter assigned to each of said at least one mid-level subject related to said at least one low-level subject (column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48), and further wherein said at least one parameter inherited by each of said at least one mid-level subject is the same as, or narrower in scope, than said at least one parameter assigned to each of said at least one top-level subject related to said at least one mid-level subject (column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48).

- j. Regarding claim 7, Sedlar shows wherein said at least one of said inherited parameters assigned to each of said at least one top-level subject is inherited from a web master (column 15, line 55-67; column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48), and further wherein said at least one parameter inherited by each of said at least one top-level subject is the same as, or narrower in scope, than said at least one parameter assigned to each of said at least one top-level subject by said web master (column 15, line 55-67; column 35, line 27-column 36, line 48).
- k. Regarding claim 8, Sedlar shows wherein each of said inherited parameters comprises a one of a privacy parameter, screening parameter, input parameter, user ID parameter, and an approval parameter (column 11, line 21-41).
- l. Regarding claim 9, Sedlar shows wherein each of said inherited parameters has at least one access level, wherein a higher one of each of said at least one access level provides more management control than a lower one of each of said at least one access level (column 11, line 21-62).
- m. Regarding claim 10, Sedlar shows wherein said distributing control through inherited parameters of said hierarchical structure further comprises: allowing said at least one top-level leader associated with said at least one top-level subject, said at least one mid-level leader associated with said at least one mid-level subject, and said at least one low-level leader associated with said at least one mid-level subject, to change respectively said at least one access level of said inherited parameters at any time (column 11, line 21-62).

- n. Regarding claim 12, Sedlar shows wherein said establishing a hierarchical structure for organizing communications further comprises: utilizing database for establishing said hierarchical structure (column 6, line 43-column 7, line21), wherein said at least a portion of said communications are stored in said hierarchical structure in said database (column 16, line 55-63).
- o. Regarding claim 13, Sedlar shows further comprising: recording and storing a communication from a user in said database when said user is not accessing said database at the time said communication is initiated (column 16, line 55-63).
- p. Regarding claim 14, Sedlar shows wherein said at least one item type is a one of an idea, question, event, review, survey, newsletter, and action item (column 27, line 24-61).
- q. Regarding claim 15, Sedlar shows wherein said at least one item type is a one of an idea, question, event, review, survey, newsletter, and action item (column 27, line 24-61).
- r. Regarding claim 16, Sedlar shows wherein said presenting a selected portion of said communications further comprises: filtering said at least a portion of said communications yielding a filtered portion of communications (column 23, line 34-47); consolidating said filtered portion of communications yielding a consolidated portion of communications (column 23, line 34-47); sorting said consolidated portion of communications yielding a sorted portion of communications (column 23, line 34-47); and presenting said sorted portion of communications according to a predetermined level of content review (column 23, line 34-47).

- s. Regarding claim 18, Sedlar shows wherein said enabling dynamic interaction further comprises: alerting said at least one said plurality users to an activity within the community, wherein said activity is a one of a topic within said hierarchical structure, an item type within said hierarchical structure, a response from an individual user within the community, a response from any one of a member of a group of users within the community, a new posting from an individual user within the community, and a new posting from any one of a member of a group of users within the community (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20).
- t. Regarding claim 19, Sedlar shows wherein said enabling dynamic interaction further comprises: alerting said at least one of said plurality of users to a message within the community, wherein said message is sent to at least a one of a home page of said at least one of said plurality of users, to an e-mail account of said at least one of said plurality of users, to a voice mail box of said at least one of said plurality of users, and to some other type of communications device of said at least one of said plurality of users (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20).
- u. Regarding claim 20, Sedlar shows wherein said enabling dynamic interaction further comprises: alerting a select group of others within the community to an activity or a message of said at least one of said plurality of users, wherein said activity is a one of a topic within said hierarchical structure, an item type within said hierarchical structure, a response from said at least one of said plurality of users, a new posting from said at least one of said plurality of users, and further wherein said message is sent to at least a one of a home page of said select group of others within the

community, to an e-mail account of said select group of others within the community, to a voice mail box of said select group of others within the community, and to some other type of communications device of said select group of others within the community (column 27, line 11-column 28, line 20)

v. Claims 21, 28, 30-31 and 34 are of the same scope as claims 1-3, 16 and 20. These are rejected for the same reason as for claims 1-3, 16 and 20.

w. Regarding claim 24, Sedlar shows wherein said application further comprises: a content access interface for determining current hierarchical structure of said database accessible by said plurality of users (column 11, line 21-62); an authorization module for authorizing each of said plurality of users to access a portion of said plurality of communications stored in said database to which each of said plurality of users have access rights and in conjunction with said inherited parameters responsibility module (column 11, line 21-62); an interaction control module for determining a dynamic interaction capability for said plurality of users with said plurality of communications stored in said database which said plurality of users have access rights in conjunction with said inherited parameters responsibility module (column 11, line 21-62). Gainey shows a content prioritizing interface for sorting and prioritizing the order said plurality of communications are presented to each of said plurality of users for review (column 7, lines 55-60: keep thread ownership, same user responds to a particular incoming message should receive all subsequent responses; column 9, lines 9-19: workflow action place the incoming mail message into a particular message queue; column 10, line 65-column 11, lines 13: priority system for linking queues specify

action timer, second queue with higher priority with shorter time out for response action).

x. Regarding claim 25, Sedlar shows further comprising: a recording module accessible by said plurality communication devices (column 1, line 58-column 2, line 12), wherein said recording module, after a user input is received in a one of said plurality communication devices on a record option, queries said database causing said database to deliver said one said plurality communication devices said hierarchical structure of said plurality of communications (column 23, line34-47), and further wherein said recording module receives a user selection input of a topic within said hierarchical structure with which to associate a communication from said one of said plurality of communication devices (column 23, line34-47), and further wherein said recording module records and stores in said database said communication sent from said one of said plurality of communication devices (column 23, line34-47).

y. Regarding claim 27, Sedlar shows wherein said recording module resides on said application and is accessed over a communication channel by user input on said record option selected from a tool bar displayed on said one of said plurality of communication devices (column 11, line 21-62).

z. Claims 35, 37-48 and 50-57 are of the same scope as claims 1-5, 9, 14-15, 18-20 and 24. These are rejected for the same reason as for claims 1-5, 9, 14-15, 18-20 and 24.

Together Sedlar and Gainey disclosed all limitations of claims 1-10, 12-16, 18-21, 24-25, 27-28, 30-31, 34-35, 37-48 and 50-57. Claims 1-10, 12-16, 18-21, 24-25, 27-28, 30-31, 34-35, 37-48 and 50-57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 11, 36 and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sedlar, Gainey and further in view of Dennis et al. (US 6466932 B1), hereinafter referred as Dennis.

- a. Sedlar and Gainey shows claim 1 as above. Neither Sedlar nor Gainey shows (claim 11) wherein said distributing control through inherited parameters said hierarchical structure further comprises: assigning an access status to each of said plurality of users, wherein said access status comprises a one of an inclusive access and an exclusive access, and further wherein said inclusive access allows access to each of said stored communications said hierarchical structure except where excluded by said inherited parameters, and further wherein said exclusive access allows access to each of said stored communications in said hierarchical structure only where explicitly assigned.
- b. Dennis shows (claim 11) wherein said distributing control through inherited parameters said hierarchical structure further comprises: assigning an access status to each of said plurality of users (column 13, line 5-36), wherein said access status comprises a one of an inclusive access and an exclusive access (column 13, line 5-36), and further wherein said inclusive access allows access to each of said stored communications said hierarchical structure except where excluded by said inherited parameters (column 13, line 5-36), and further wherein said exclusive access allows access to each of said stored communications in said hierarchical structure only where explicitly assigned (column 13, line 5-36) in an analogous art for the purpose of implementing group policy.

- c. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify Sedlar's functions of message based event notification system on a hierarchical file system with Gainey's functions of e-mail management workflow and Dennis' functions of access control.
- d. The modification would have been obvious because one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate e-mail processing workflow based on action priority per Gainey (column 6, lines 19-53)' teaching and have more explicit access control per Dennis (column 5, lines 15-64)' teaching in addition to a hierarchical access and event functions per Sedlar (column 11, line 21-62; column 27, line 24-column 28, line 20)'s teaching.
- e. Claims 36 and 49 are of the same scope as claim 11. These are rejected for the same reasons as for claim 11.

Together Sedlar, Gainey and Dennis disclosed all limitations of claims 11, 36 and 49. Claims 11, 36 and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

9. Claims 17 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sedlar, Gainey and further in view of Gilchrist et al. (US 6081832 A), hereinafter referred as Gilchrist.

- a. Sedlar and Gainey shows claim 1 as above. Neither Sedlar nor Gainey shows (claim 17) wherein said storing in said hierarchical structure further comprises: attaching a resource to at least one of said at least a portion of said communications, wherein said resource is a one of an internal database link, a document/file attachment, and an external Internet link.

- b. Gilchrist shows (claim 17) wherein said storing in said hierarchical structure further comprises: attaching a resource to at least one of said at least a portion of said communications, wherein said resource is a one of an internal database link, a document/file attachment, and an external Internet link (column 15, line 43-58; column 22, line 58-column 23, line 13) in an analogous art for the purpose of object oriented mail server framework mechanism.
- c. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify Sedlar's functions of message based event notification system on a hierarchical file system with Gainey's functions of e-mail management workflow and Gilchrist's functions of attachment.
- d. The modification would have been obvious because one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate e-mail processing workflow based on action priority per Gainey (column 6, lines 19-53)' teaching and have message attachment per Gilchrist (column 15, line 43-58)'s teaching in addition to a hierarchical access and event functions per Sedlar (column 11, line 21-62; column 27, line 24-column 28, line 20)'s teaching.
- e. Claim 29 is of the same scope as claim 17. It is rejected for the same reasons as for claim 17.

Together Sedlar, Gainey and Gilchrist disclosed all limitations of claims 17 and 29. Claims 17 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

10. Claims 22-23, 26 and 32-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sedlar, Gainey and further in view of Underwood (US 6718535 B1), hereinafter referred as Underwood.

- a. Sedlar and Gainey shows claim 1, 21 and 25 as above. Neither Sedlar nor Gainey shows (claim 22) wherein said application platform is a one of a centralized application platform architecture and a distributed application platform architecture, wherein said distributed application platform architecture has a plurality of databases for storing distributively said plurality of communications.
- b. Underwood shows (claim 22) wherein said application platform is a one of a centralized application platform architecture and a distributed application platform architecture (column 1, line 47-column 2, line 32), wherein said distributed application platform architecture has a plurality of databases for storing distributively said plurality of communications (column 46, 52-column 47, line 4; column 120, lines 16-57) in an analogous art for the purpose of an activity framework design in an e-commerce based environment.
- c. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify Sedlar's functions of message based event notification system on a hierarchical file system with Gainey's functions of e-mail management workflow and Underwood's functions of client/server distributed information database.
- d. The modification would have been obvious because one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate e-mail processing workflow based on

action priority per Gainey (column 6, lines 19-53)' teaching and have distributive information database functions per Underwood (column 2, lines 8-18)'s teaching in addition to a hierarchical access and event functions per Sedlar (column 11, lines 21-62; column 27, line 24-column 28, line 20)'s teaching.

- e. Regarding claim 23, Underwood shows further comprising: for said distributed application platform architecture, an inherited parameters synchronization module for determining a one of a plurality of application platforms of said distributed application platform that contains a portion of said plurality of communications sought by a one of said plurality of users, and for routing said one of said plurality of users to said one of a plurality of application platforms (column 1, line 47, column 2, line 32); and a content synchronization module for exchanging and synchronizing content between said plurality of databases (column 46, 52-column 47, line 4; column 120, lines 16-57).
- f. Regarding claim 26, Underwood shows wherein said recording module resides on said one of said plurality of communication devices (column 46, line 52-column 47, line 4; column 120, lines 16-57).
- g. Regarding claim 32, Underwood shows wherein said reviewing module further comprises: a customized interactive reviewing module for creating digital binder, wherein said customized interactive reviewing module allows each of said plurality of users to aggregate in said digital binder a specific portion of said plurality of communications most useful to each of said plurality of users (column 46, line 52-column 47, line 4, column 120, lines 16-57).

h. Regarding claim 33, Underwood shows wherein said input module and said thread synchronization module update said digital binder in real time with new content received in said application related to said specific portion of said plurality of communications aggregated in said digital binder (column 46, line 52-column 47, line 4, column 120, lines 16-57)

Together Sedlar, Gainey and Underwood disclosed all limitations of claims 22-23, 26 and 32-33. Claims 22-23, 26 and 32-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

***Response to Arguments***

11. Applicant's arguments dated 01/22/2008 with respect to pending claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

- a. Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 21, 35 and 48 with the limitations of "wherein an initial thread of said plurality of communications is assigned a higher priority than a response to a thread of said plurality of communications" and "presenting to at least a one of said plurality of users at least a portion of said plurality of communications based on said prioritization". Examiner has reviewed the limitation in light of applicant's original specification and claim language. Examiner has reviewed the office actions dated 07/07/2006, 04/04/2007, 10/17/2007 and applicant prior arts, i.e. Sedlar and Dennis. Examiner has searched based on the limitations as per whole independent claim language and found that Gainey seems to have shown the limitations in combinatory with Sedlar. Claim 1, 21, 30, 35 and 48 rejections are updated to reflect applicant's amended claim language changes and references cited from Sedlar and Gainey.
- b. Applicant's arguments (see last paragraph on page 31, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph on page 32, last paragraph on pages 33, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph on page 34, 1<sup>st</sup> and last paragraphs on page 35) are primarily on the cited limitations as per item a above. The newly updated claim rejections should address applicant's arguments.

***Remarks***

12. The following pertaining arts are discovered and not used in this office action. Office reserves the right to use these arts in later actions.

- a. Schneider et al. (US 6105027 A) Techniques for eliminating redundant access checking by access filters
- b. Clancey et al. (US 6216098 B1) Simulating work behavior
- c. Du et al. (US 6308163 B1) System and method for enterprise workflow resource management
- d. Bowman-Amuah (US 6697824 B1) Relationship management in an E-commerce application framework

***Conclusion***

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Refer to the enclosed PTO-892 for details.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peling A. Shaw whose telephone number is (571) 272-7968. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00 - 4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William C. Vaughn can be reached on (571) 272-3922. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/P. A. S./  
Examiner, Art Unit 2144

/William C. Vaughn, Jr./  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2144